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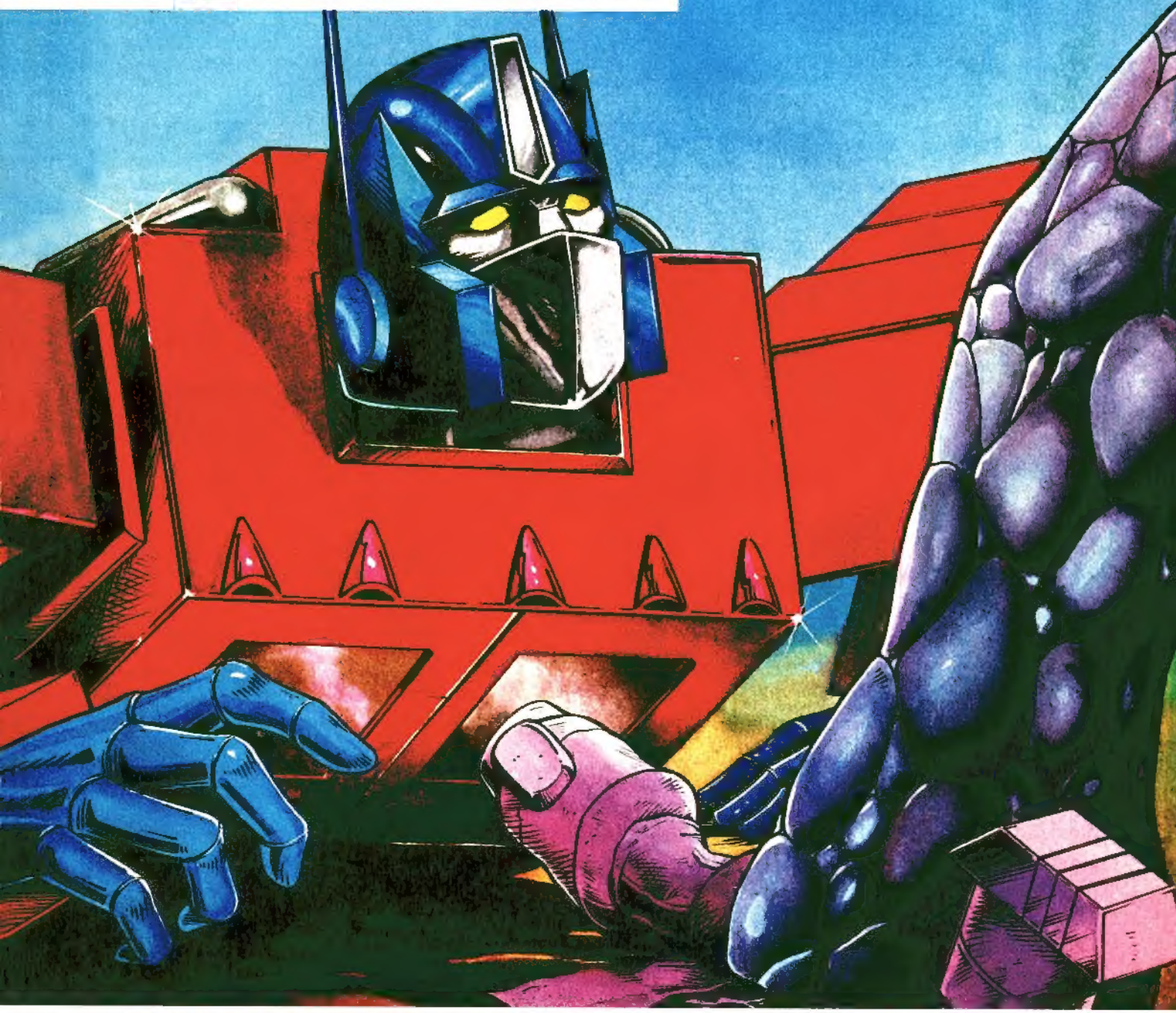
17th Jan. 87
No96 30p
U.S. $1.25 CAN. $1.75

THE TRANSFORMERS™

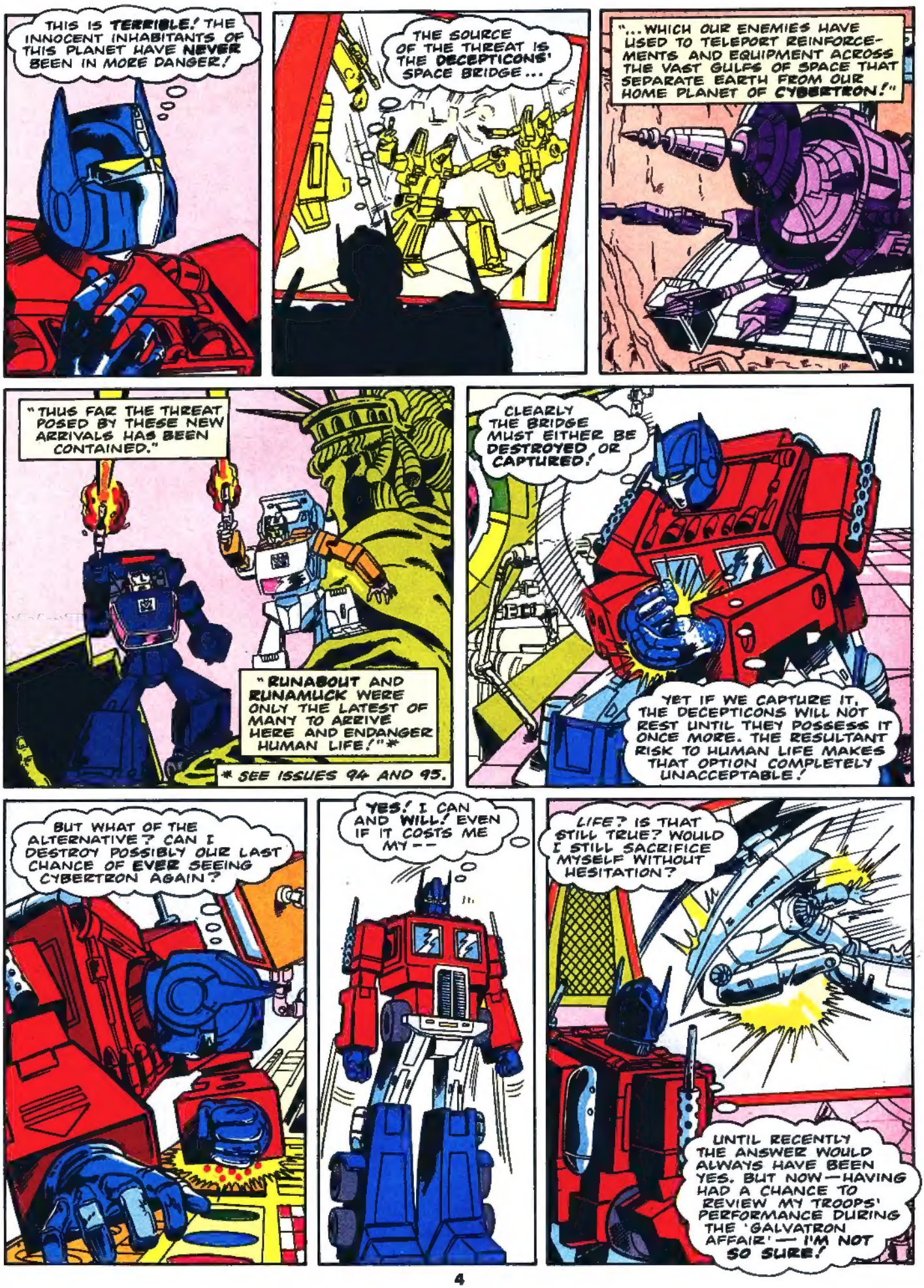
HEROIC AUTOBOT

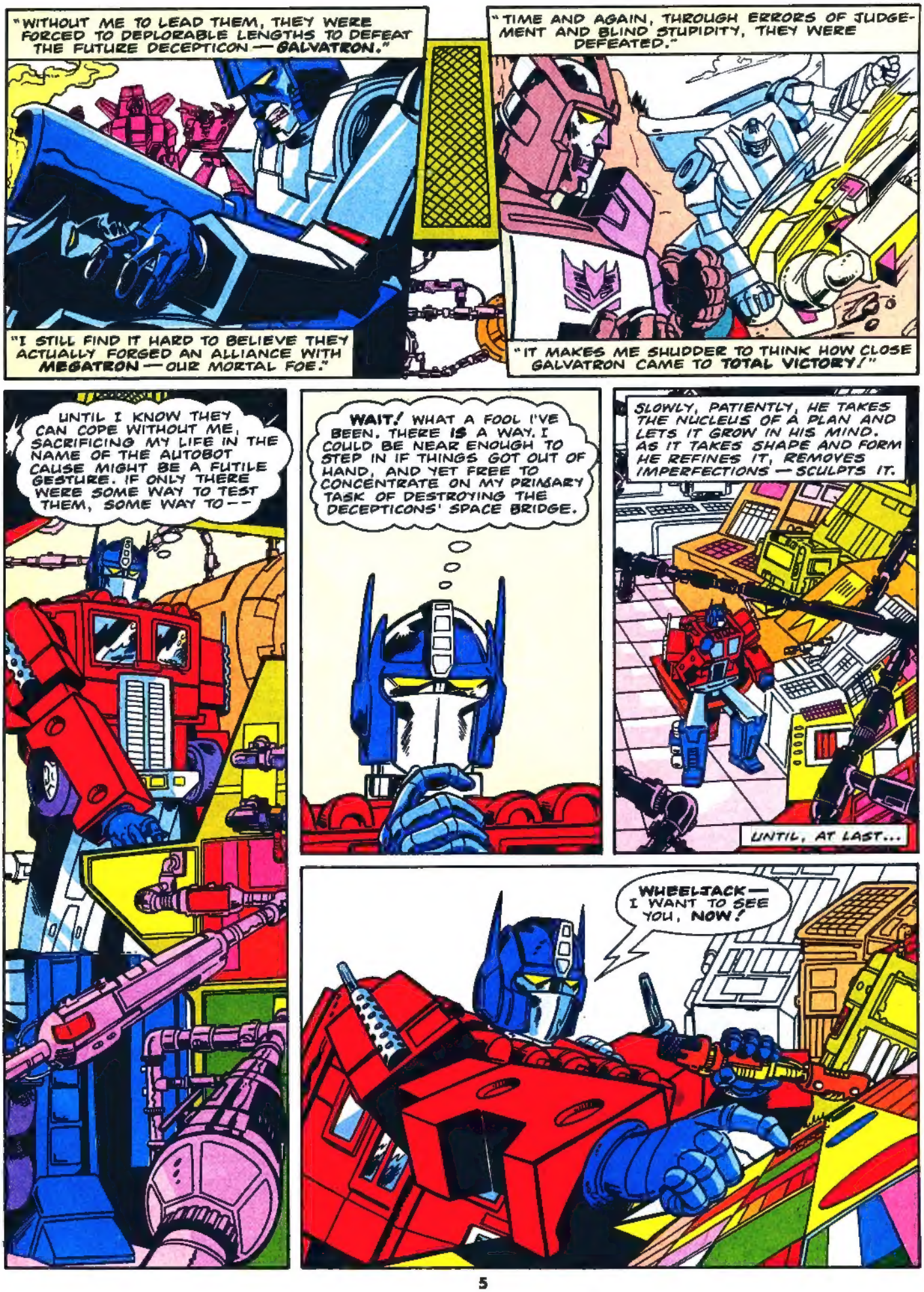
PRIME'S THE PREY...

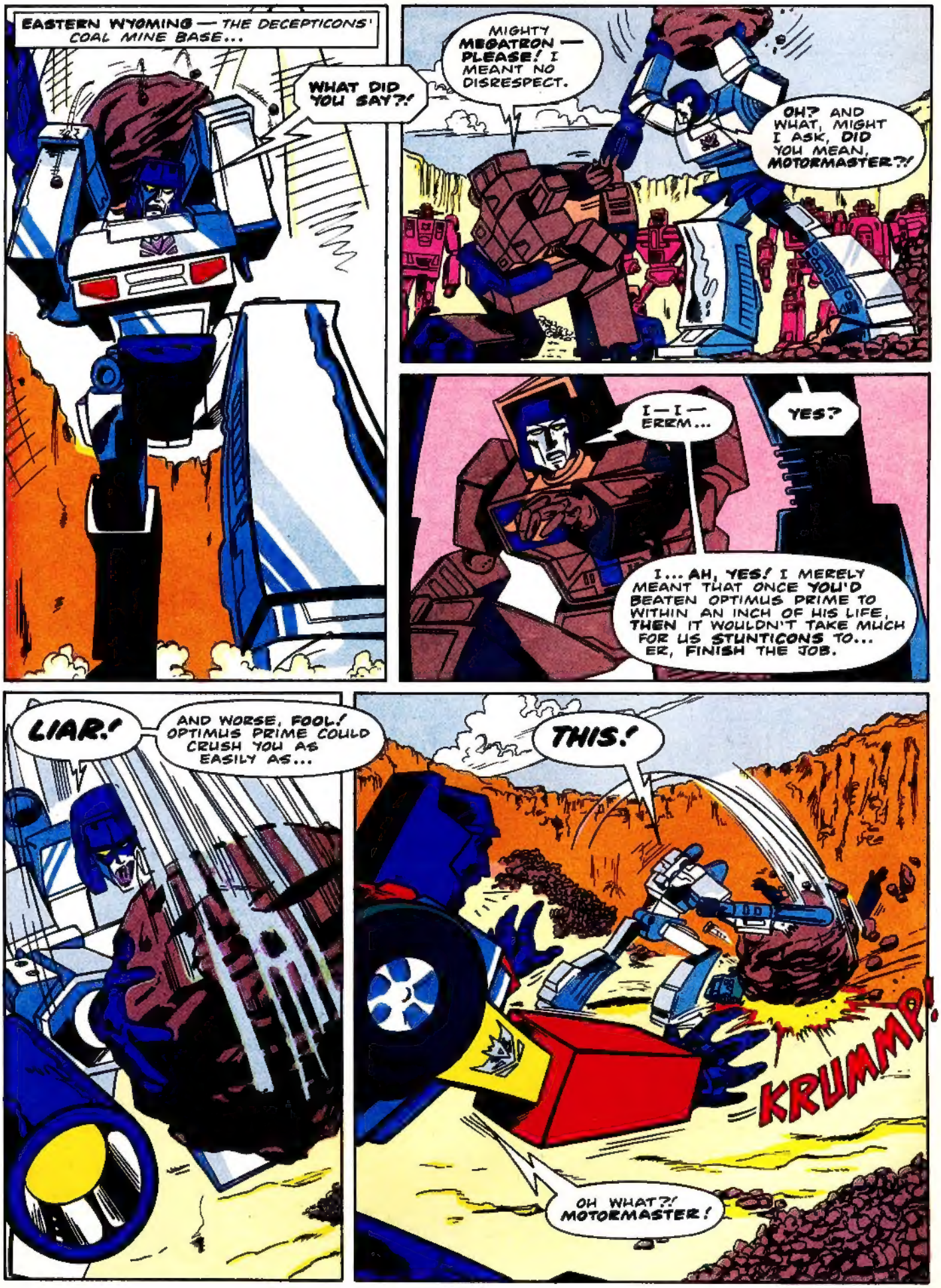


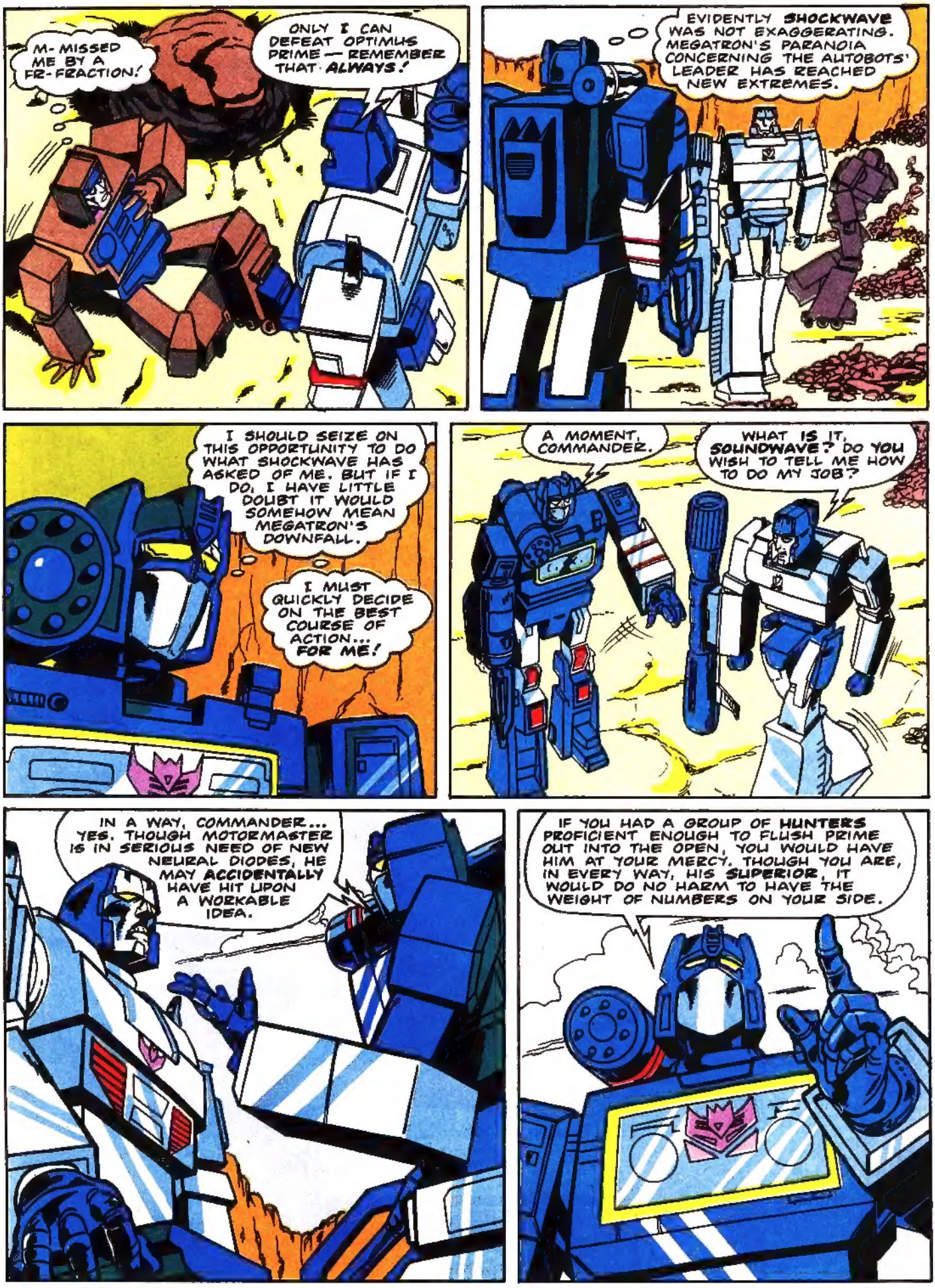
...AND HE HASN'T GOT A PRAYER!

TRANSFORMERS™
SCRIPT – SIMON FURMAN
PENCILS – WILL SIMPSON
INKS – TIM PERKINS
PREY!
< PART 1 >
LETTERS – ANNIE
COLOUR – STEVE WHITE
EDITOR – IAN RIMMER
HE SHOULD FEEL SAFE.
DEEP WITHIN THE ARK— THE DISABLED SPACECRAFT THAT SERVES AS HOME FOR THE HEROIC AUTOBOTS HERE ON EARTH — HE IS SURROUNDED BY THE MOST SOPHISTICATED DEFENCE SYSTEMS AND THE MOST COMMITTED WARRIORS. HE SHOULD FEEL SAFE.
OPTIMUS PRIME HAS NEVER FELT MORE THREATENED!


THIS IS TERRIBLE! THE INNOCENT INHABITANTS OF THIS PLANET HAVE NEVER BEEN IN MORE DANGER!
THE SOURCE OF THE THREAT IS THE DECEPTICONS' SPACE BRIDGE...
"...WHICH OUR ENEMIES HAVE USED TO TELEPORT REINFORCEMENTS AND EQUIPMENT ACROSS THE VAST GULFS OF SPACE THAT SEPARATE EARTH FROM OUR HOME PLANET OF CYBERTRON!"
"THUS FAR THE THREAT POSED BY THESE NEW ARRIVALS HAS BEEN CONTAINED."
"RUNABOUT AND RUNAMUCK WERE ONLY THE LATEST OF MANY TO ARRIVE HERE AND ENDANGER HUMAN LIFE!"*
* SEE ISSUES 94 AND 95.
CLEARLY THE BRIDGE MUST EITHER BE DESTROYED OR CAPTURED!
YET IF WE CAPTURE IT, THE DECEPTICONS WILL NOT REST UNTIL THEY POSSESS IT ONCE MORE. THE RESULTANT RISK TO HUMAN LIFE MAKES THAT OPTION COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE!
BUT WHAT OF THE ALTERNATIVE? CAN I DESTROY POSSIBLY OUR LAST CHANCE OF EVER SEEING CYBERTRON AGAIN?
YES! I CAN AND WILL! EVEN IF IT COSTS ME MY--
LIFE? IS THAT STILL TRUE? WOULD I STILL SACRIFICE MYSELF WITHOUT HESITATION?
UNTIL RECENTLY THE ANSWER WOULD ALWAYS HAVE BEEN YES. BUT NOW—HAVING HAD A CHANCE TO REVIEW MY TROOPS' PERFORMANCE DURING THE 'GALVATRON AFFAIR'— I'M NOT SO SURE!

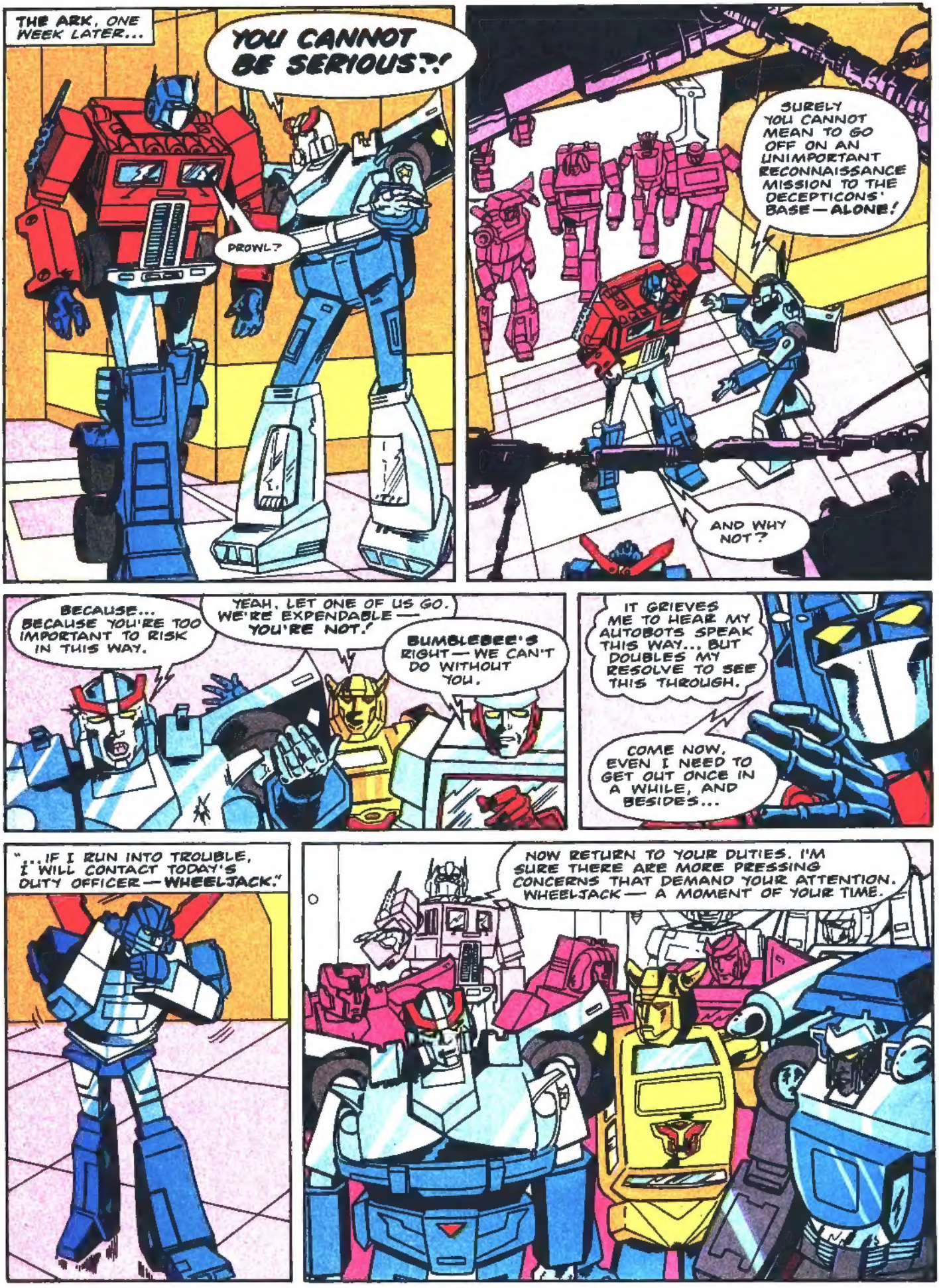

"WITHOUT ME TO LEAD THEM, THEY WERE FORCED TO DEPLORABLE LENGTHS TO DEFEAT THE FUTURE DECEPTICON — GALVATRON."
"I STILL FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THEY ACTUALLY FORGED AN ALLIANCE WITH MEGATRON — OUR MORTAL FOE."
"TIME AND AGAIN, THROUGH ERRORS OF JUDGEMENT AND BLIND STUPIDITY, THEY WERE DEFEATED."
"IT MAKES ME SHUDDER TO THINK HOW CLOSE GALVATRON CAME TO TOTAL VICTORY!"
UNTIL I KNOW THEY CAN COPE WITHOUT ME, SACRIFICING MY LIFE IN THE NAME OF THE AUTOBOT CAUSE MIGHT BE A FUTILE GESTURE. IF ONLY THERE WERE SOME WAY TO TEST THEM, SOME WAY TO --
WAIT! WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN. THERE IS A WAY. I COULD BE NEAR ENOUGH TO STEP IN IF THINGS GOT OUT OF HAND, AND YET FREE TO CONCENTRATE ON MY PRIMARY TASK OF DESTROYING THE DECEPTICONS' SPACE BRIDGE.
SLOWLY, PATIENTLY, HE TAKES THE NUCLEUS OF A PLAN AND LETS IT GROW IN HIS MIND. AS IT TAKES SHAPE AND FORM HE REFINES IT, REMOVES IMPERFECTIONS — SCULPTS IT.
UNTIL, AT LAST...
WHEELJACK — I WANT TO SEE YOU, NOW!

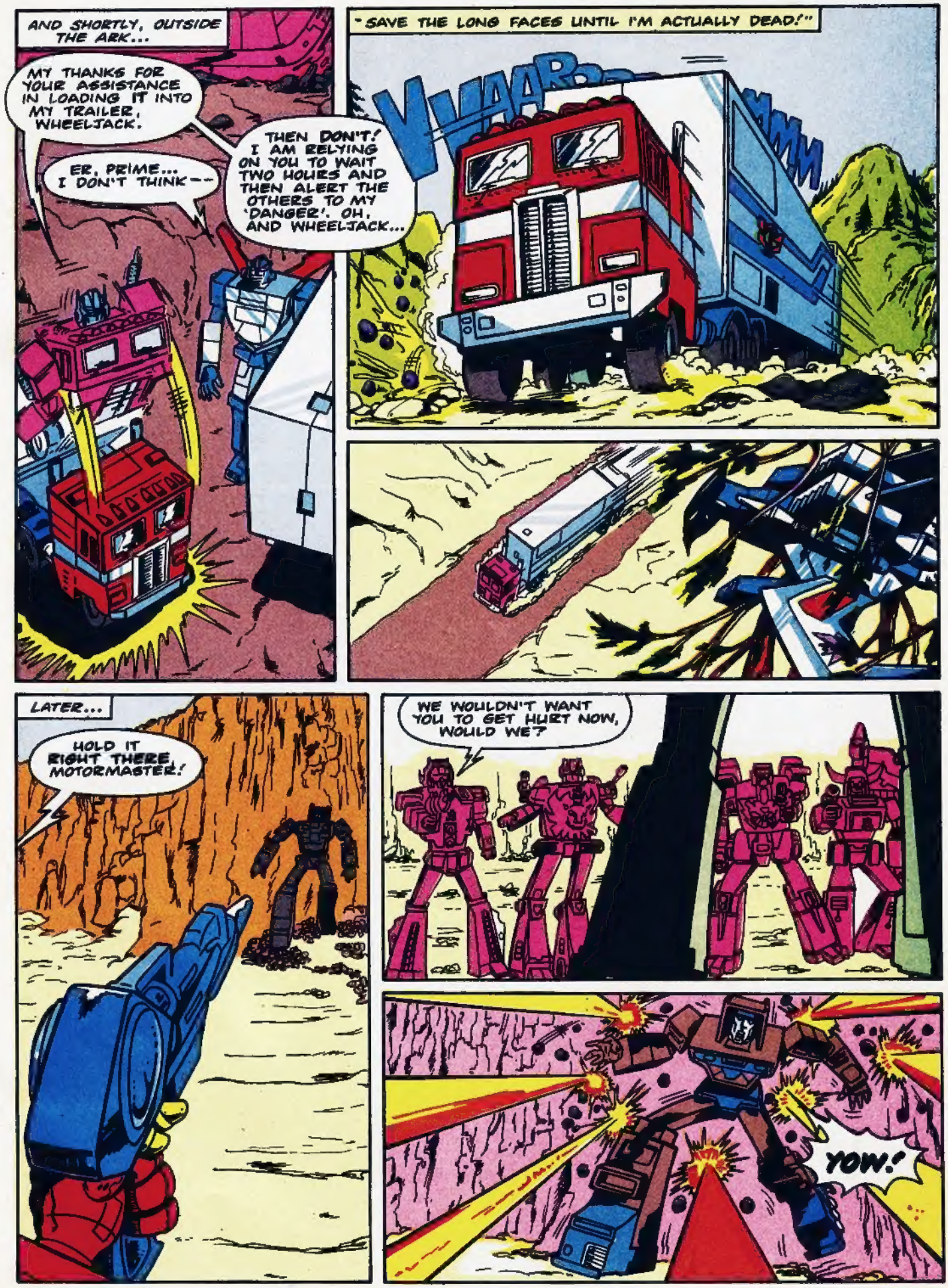

EASTERN WYOMING — THE DECEPTICONS' COAL MINE BASE...
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
MIGHTY MEGATRON — PLEASE! I MEANT NO DISRESPECT.
OH? AND WHAT, MIGHT I ASK, DID YOU MEAN, MOTORMASTER?!
I — I — ERRM...
YES?
I... AH, YES! I MERELY MEANT THAT ONCE YOU'D BEATEN OPTIMUS PRIME TO WITHIN AN INCH OF HIS LIFE, THEN IT WOULDN'T TAKE MUCH FOR US STUNTICONS TO... ER, FINISH THE JOB.
LIAR!
AND WORSE, FOOL! OPTIMUS PRIME COULD CRUSH YOU AS EASILY AS...
THIS!
KRUMMP!
OH WHAT?! MOTORMASTER!

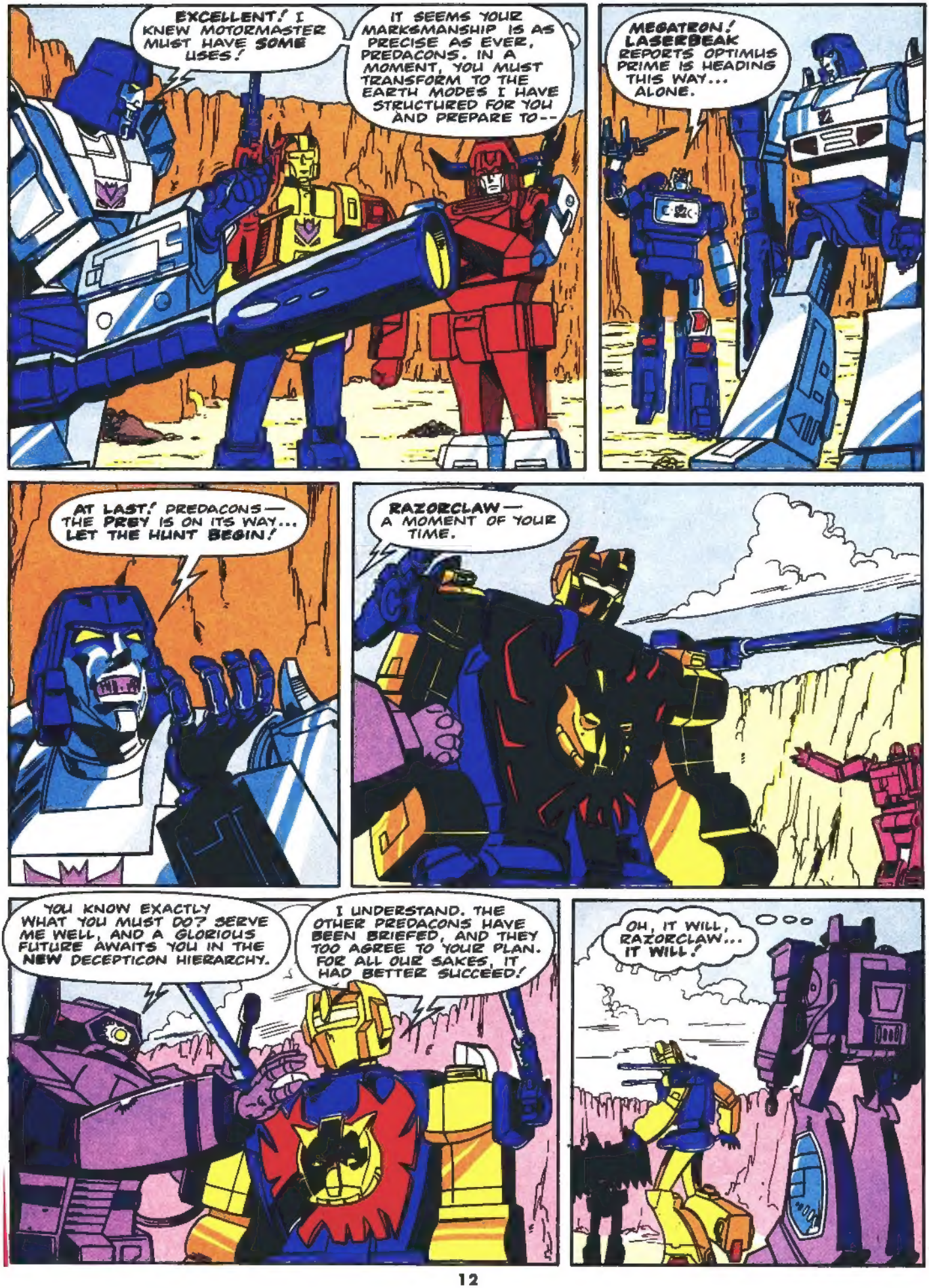

M-MISSED ME BY A FR-FRACTION!
ONLY I CAN DEFEAT OPTIMUS PRIME — REMEMBER THAT ALWAYS!
EVIDENTLY SHOCKWAVE WAS NOT EXAGGERATING. MEGATRON'S PARANOIA CONCERNING THE AUTOBOTS' LEADER HAS REACHED NEW EXTREMES.
I SHOULD SEIZE ON THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DO WHAT SHOCKWAVE HAS ASKED OF ME. BUT IF I DO, I HAVE LITTLE DOUBT IT WOULD SOMEHOW MEAN MEGATRON'S DOWNFALL.
I MUST QUICKLY DECIDE ON THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION... FOR ME!
A MOMENT, COMMANDER.
WHAT IS IT, SOUNDWAVE? DO YOU WISH TO TELL ME HOW TO DO MY JOB?
IN A WAY, COMMANDER... YES. THOUGH MOTORMASTER IS IN SERIOUS NEED OF NEW NEURAL DIODES, HE MAY ACCIDENTALLY HAVE HIT UPON A WORKABLE IDEA.
IF YOU HAD A GROUP OF HUNTERS PROFICIENT ENOUGH TO FLUSH PRIME OUT INTO THE OPEN, YOU WOULD HAVE HIM AT YOUR MERCY. THOUGH YOU ARE, IN EVERY WAY, HIS SUPERIOR, IT WOULD DO NO HARM TO HAVE THE WEIGHT OF NUMBERS ON YOUR SIDE.

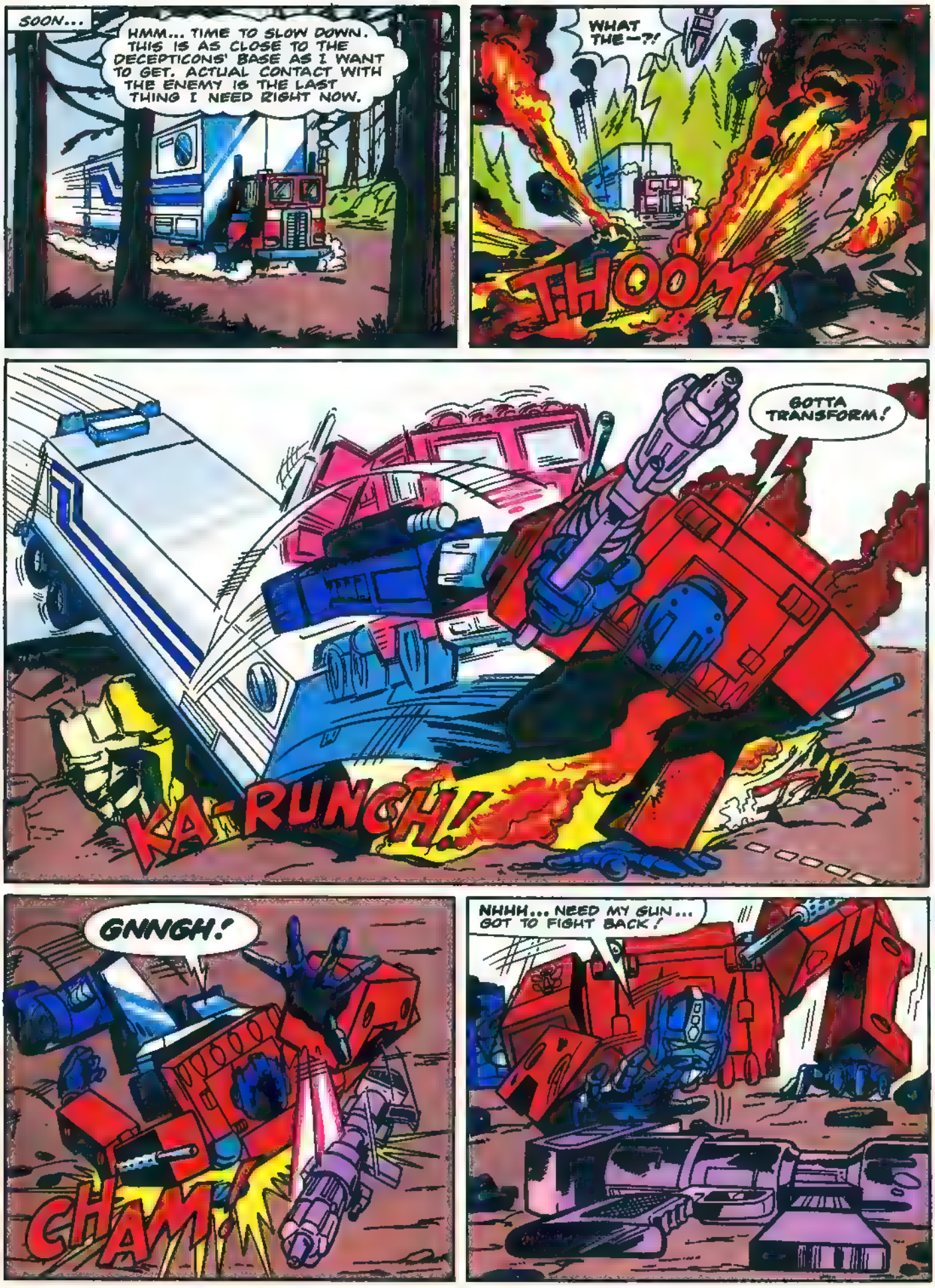
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

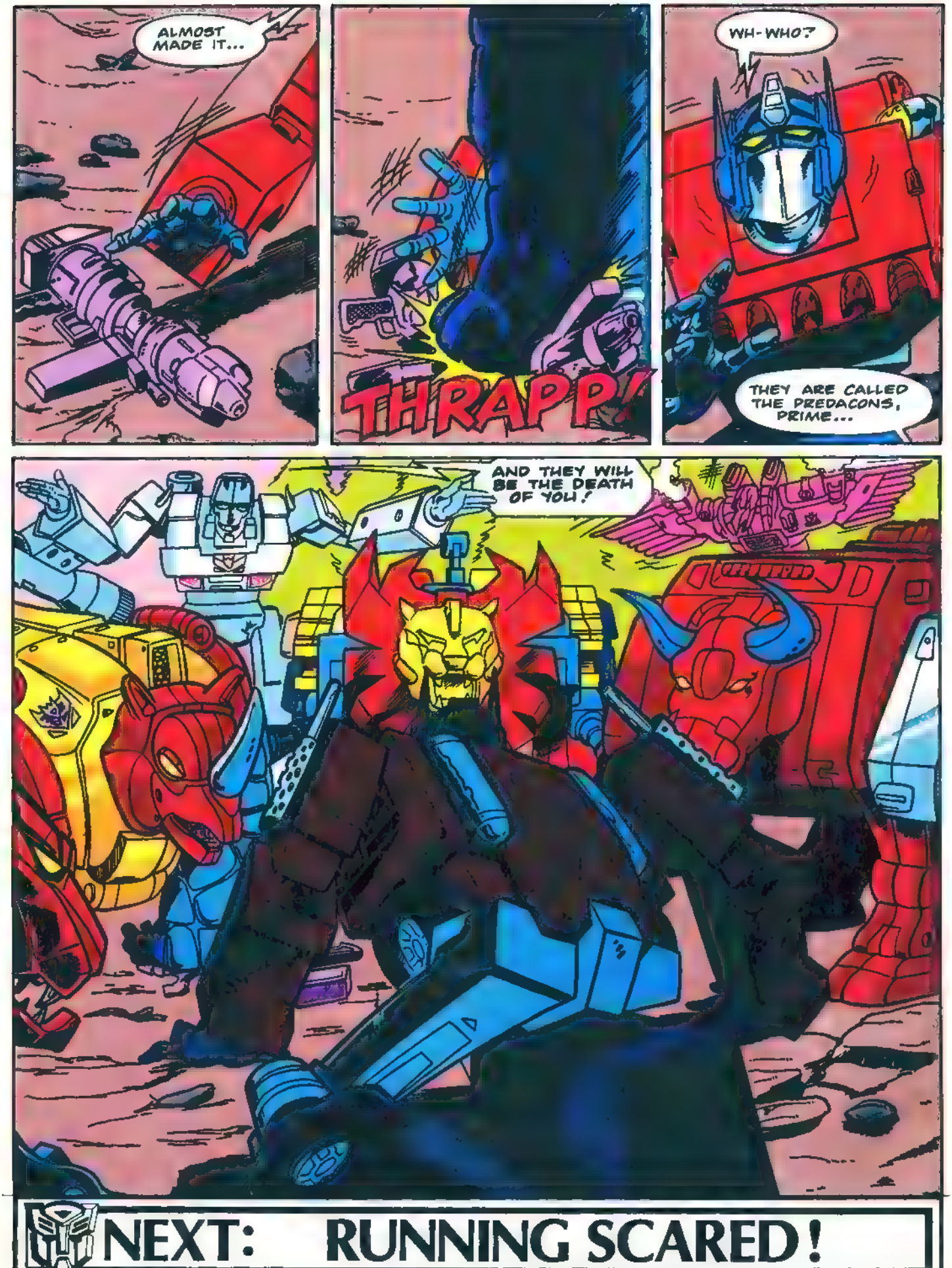
WHAT YOU SUGGEST HAS MERIT. BUT WHERE WOULD WE FIND--?
ON CYBERTRON! OUR ELITE CADRE OF HUNTERS STILL EXISTS!
OF COURSE...
THE PREDACONS!
DO IT, SOUNDWAVE! SUMMON THEM HERE VIA THE SPACE BRIDGE. OPTIMUS PRIME IS AS GOOD AS--
DEAD, MEGATRON? I DOUBT THAT VERY MUCH!
KLIK!
I HAVE SEEN A SIDE OF OPTIMUS PRIME YOU COULD NEVER DREAM OF. WHEN WE FOUGHT IN THAT MURKY LITTLE DIMENSION*, I CAME TO UNDERSTAND WHY WE HAVE NEVER CONVINCINGLY BEATEN HIM.
* A STORY YOU'LL SEE IN TRANSFORMERS 100!
SO IT IS LOGICAL, IS IT NOT, TO MAKE USE OF THIS KNOWLEDGE AND MANOEUVRE PRIME AND MEGATRON INTO A SITUATION WHERE THE ONLY WINNER IS SHOCKWAVE! SOON I SHALL REIGN SUPREME...
AS RULER OF THE DECEPTICONS!


THE ARK, ONE WEEK LATER...
YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS?!
PROWL?
SURELY YOU CANNOT MEAN TO GO OFF ON AN UNIMPORTANT RECONNAISSANCE MISSION TO THE DECEPTICONS' BASE—ALONE!
AND WHY NOT?
BECAUSE... BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO IMPORTANT TO RISK IN THIS WAY.
YEAH, LET ONE OF US GO. WE'RE EXPENDABLE— YOU'RE NOT.
BUMBLEBEE'S RIGHT—WE CAN'T DO WITHOUT YOU.
IT GRIEVES ME TO HEAR MY AUTOBOTS SPEAK THIS WAY... BUT DOUBLES MY RESOLVE TO SEE THIS THROUGH.
COME NOW, EVEN I NEED TO GET OUT ONCE IN A WHILE, AND BESIDES...
"...IF I RUN INTO TROUBLE, I WILL CONTACT TODAY'S DUTY OFFICER—WHEELJACK."
NOW RETURN TO YOUR DUTIES. I'M SURE THERE ARE MORE PRESSING CONCERNS THAT DEMAND YOUR ATTENTION. WHEELJACK— A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME.


AND SHORTLY, OUTSIDE THE ARK...
MY THANKS FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN LOADING IT INTO MY TRAILER, WHEELJACK.
ER, PRIME... I DON'T THINK--
THEN DON'T! I AM RELYING ON YOU TO WAIT TWO HOURS AND THEN ALERT THE OTHERS TO MY 'DANGER'. OH, AND WHEELJACK...
"SAVE THE LONG FACES UNTIL I'M ACTUALLY DEAD!"
VUAAR
MMM
LATER...
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE MOTORMASTER!
WE WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO GET HURT NOW, WOULD WE?
YOW!


EXCELLENT! I KNEW MOTORMASTER MUST HAVE SOME USES!
IT SEEMS YOUR MARKSMANSHIP IS AS PRECISE AS EVER, PREDACONS. IN A MOMENT, YOU MUST TRANSFORM TO THE EARTH MODES I HAVE STRUCTURED FOR YOU AND PREPARE TO--
MEGATRON! LASERBEAK REPORTS OPTIMUS PRIME IS HEADING THIS WAY... ALONE.
AT LAST! PREDACONS— THE PREY IS ON ITS WAY... LET THE HUNT BEGIN!
RAZORCLAW— A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME.
YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU MUST DO? SERVE ME WELL, AND A GLORIOUS FUTURE AWAITS YOU IN THE NEW DECEPTICON HIERARCHY.
I UNDERSTAND. THE OTHER PREDACONS HAVE BEEN BRIEFED, AND THEY TOO AGREE TO YOUR PLAN. FOR ALL OUR SAKES, IT HAD BETTER SUCCEED!
OH, IT WILL, RAZORCLAW... IT WILL!


SOON...
HMM... TIME TO SLOW DOWN. THIS IS AS CLOSE TO THE DECEPTICONS' BASE AS I WANT TO GET. ACTUAL CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY IS THE LAST THING I NEED RIGHT NOW.
WHAT THE—?!
THOOM!
GOTTA TRANSFORM!
KA-RUNCH!
GNNGH!
CHAM
NHHH... NEED MY GUN... GOT TO FIGHT BACK!



NEXT: RUNNING SCARED!

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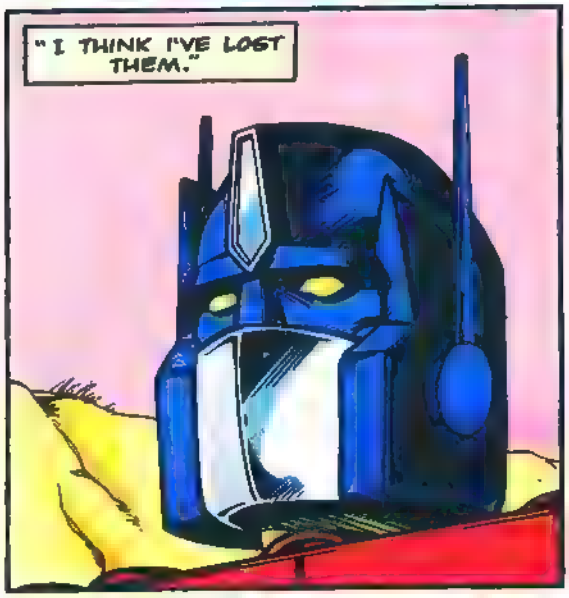
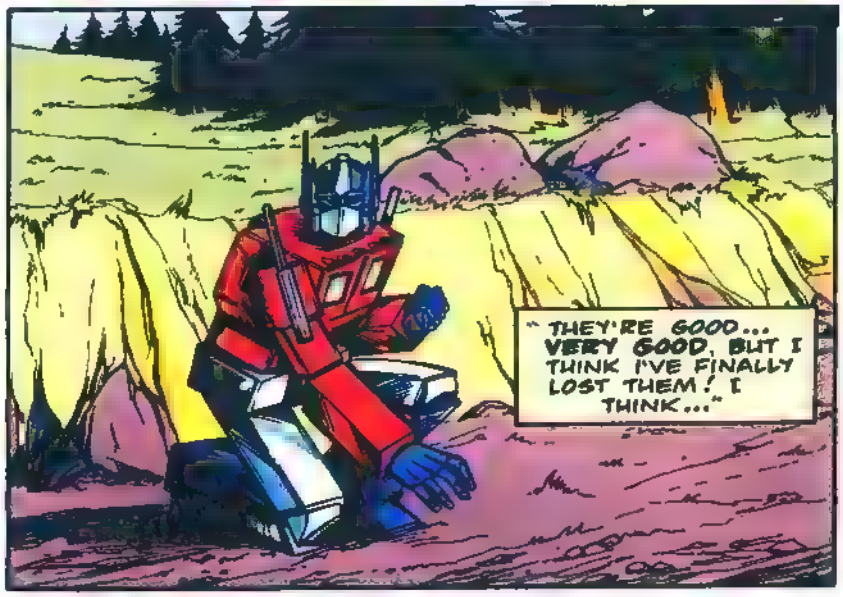
THE TRANSFORMERS™

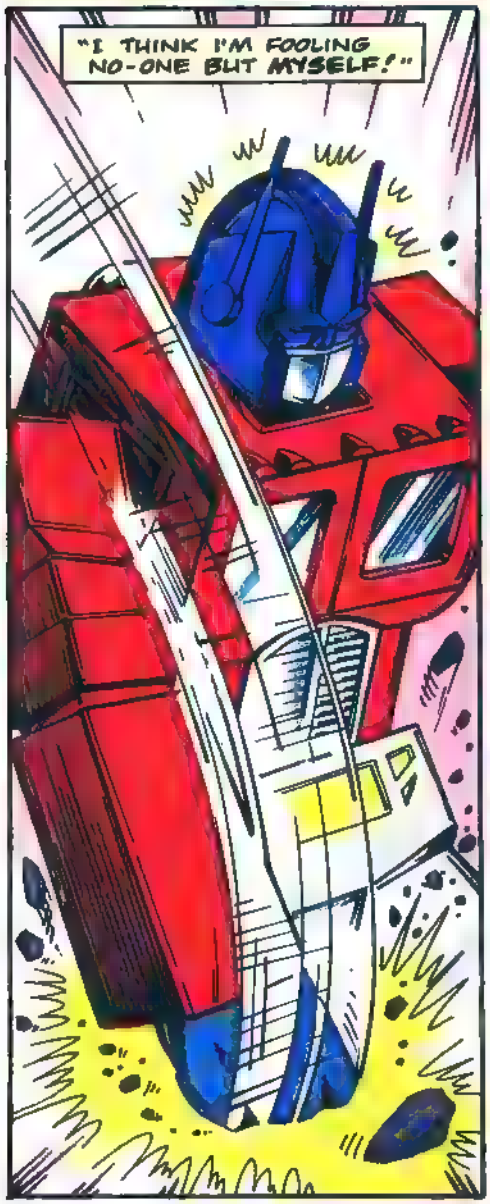
HEROIC AUTOBOT

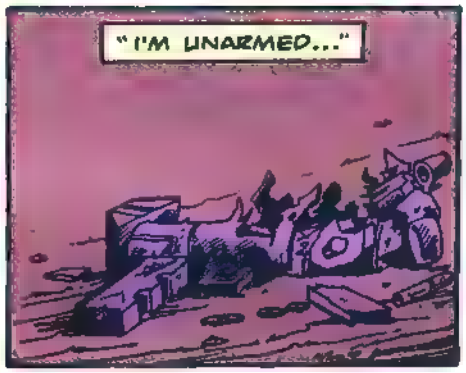
TERROR OF THE PREDACONS!

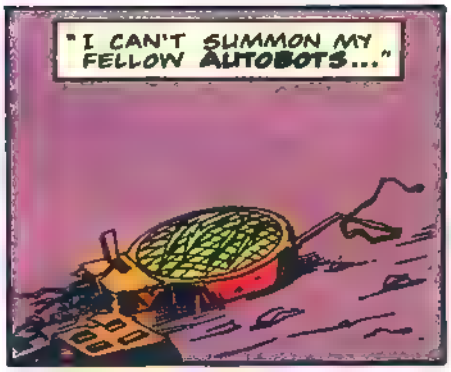
TRANSFORMERS™

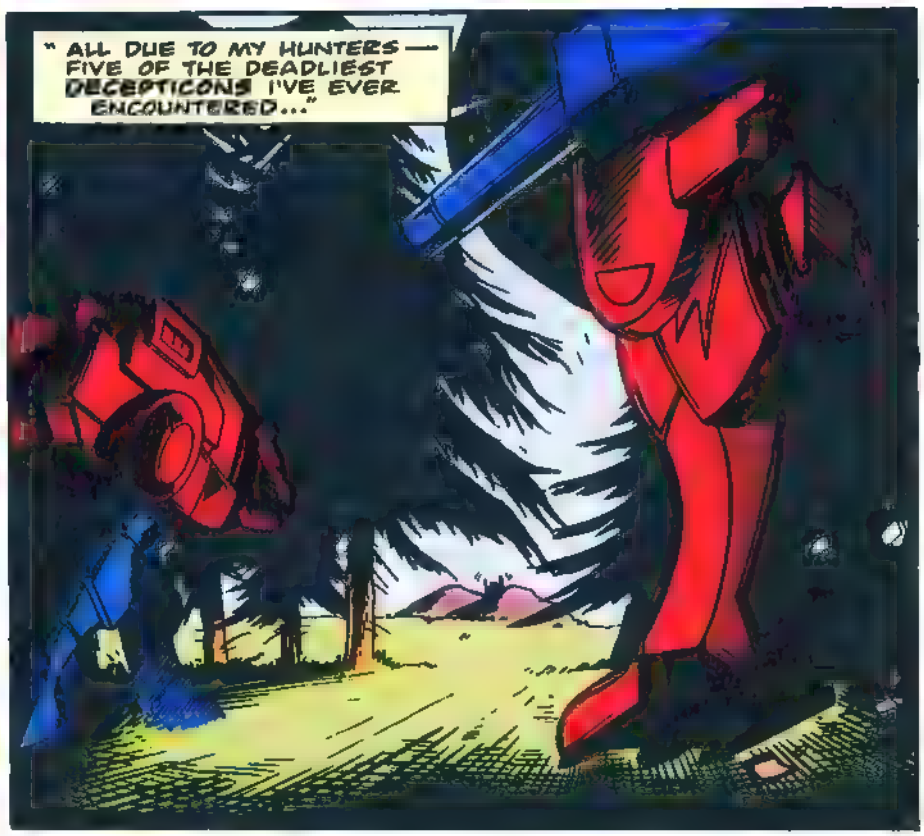




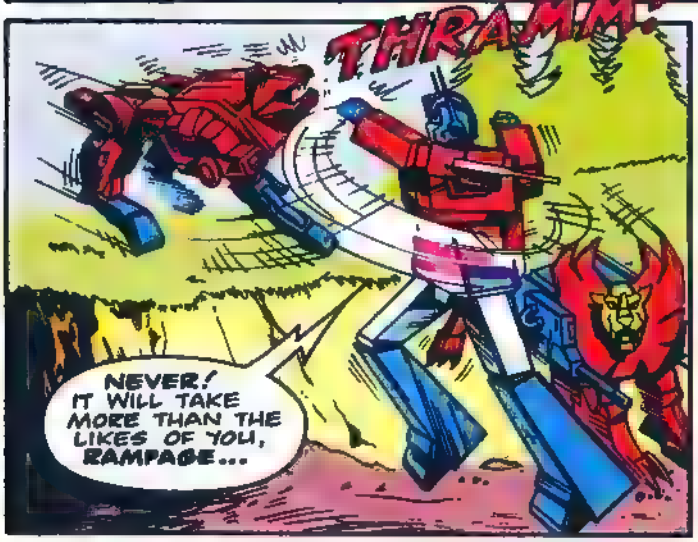


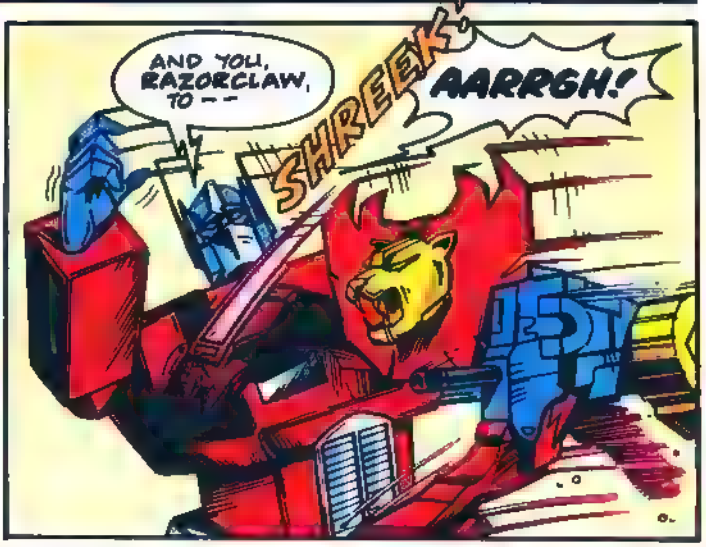


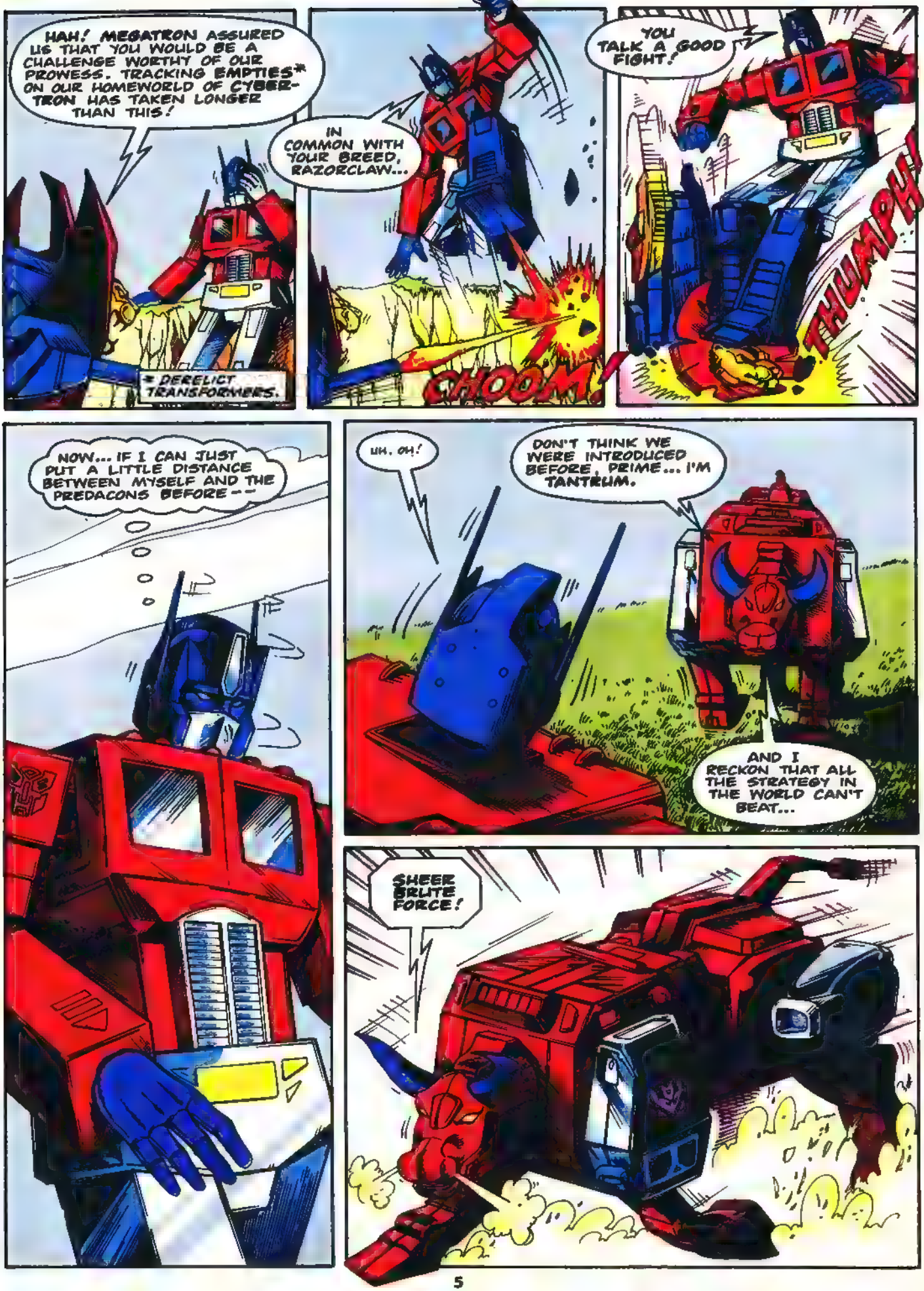


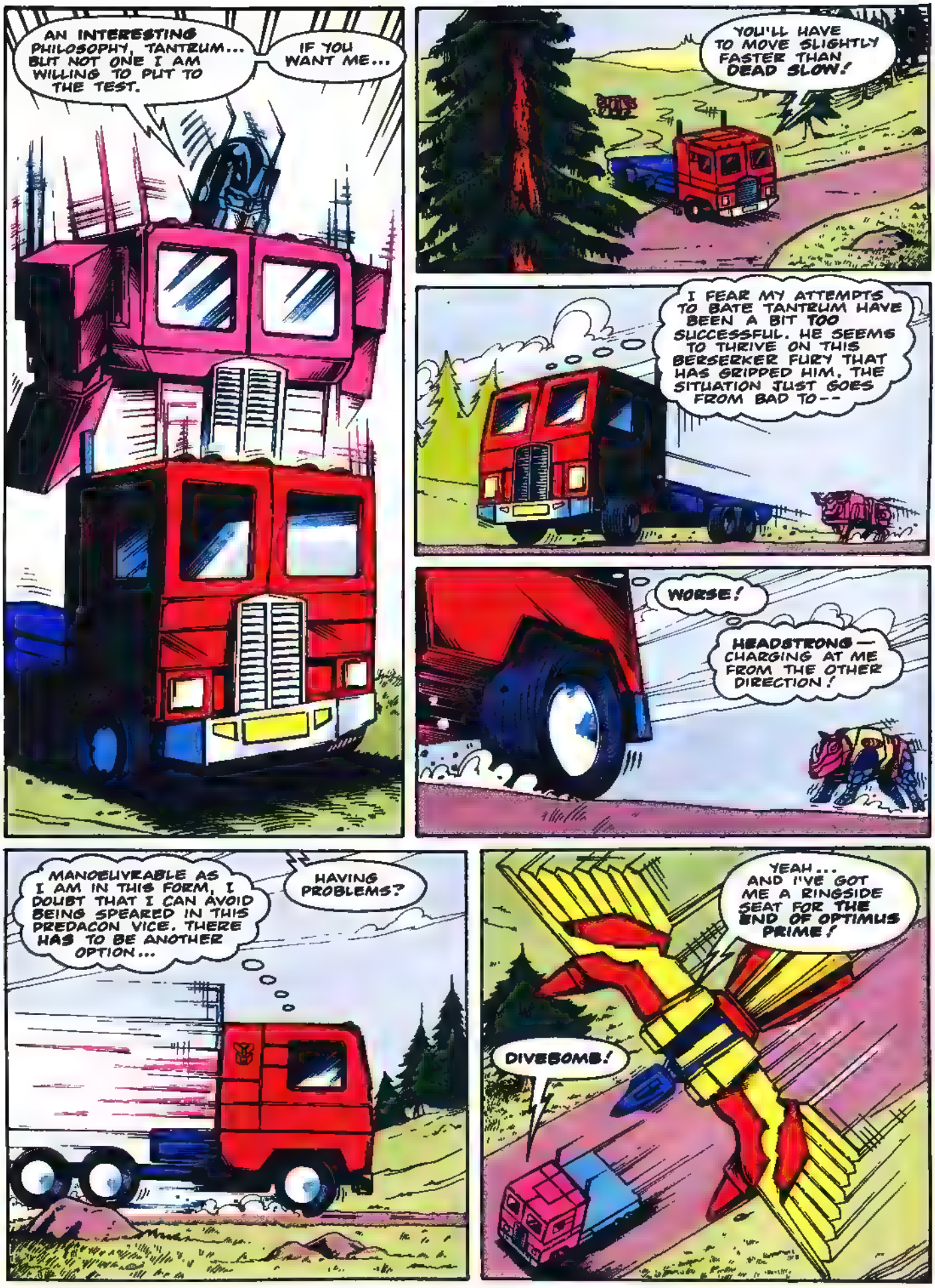


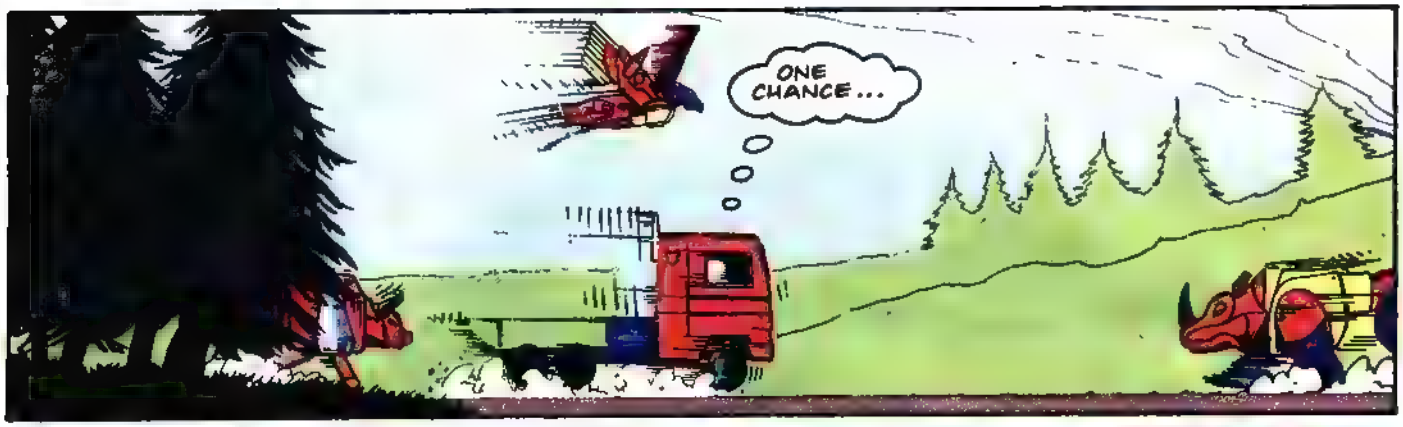
THE PREDACONS!
FOR YOU, OPTIMUS PRIME...
THE HUNT IS OVER!
PREY!
PART 2
SCRIPT — SIMON FURMAN
ART — JEFF ANDERSON
LETTERING — ANNIE HALFACREE
COLOURING — STEVE WHITE
EDITOR — IAN RIMMER

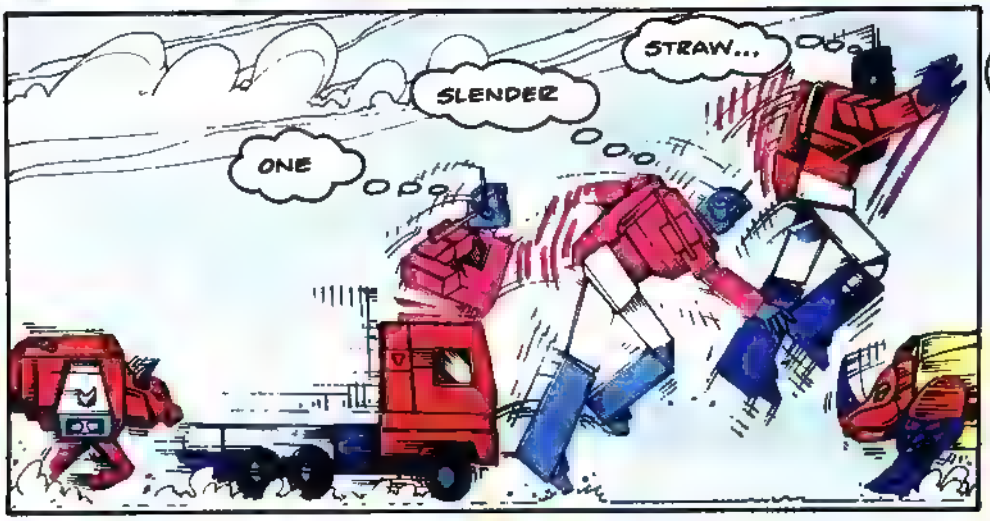

THRAMM!
NEVER! IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN THE LIKES OF YOU, RAMPAGE...

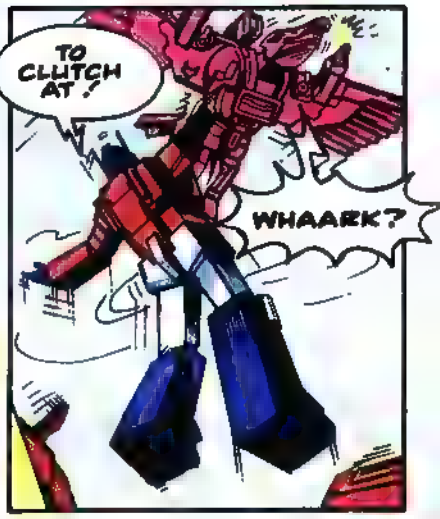

AND YOU, RAZORCLAW, TO--
SHREEK!
AARRGH!

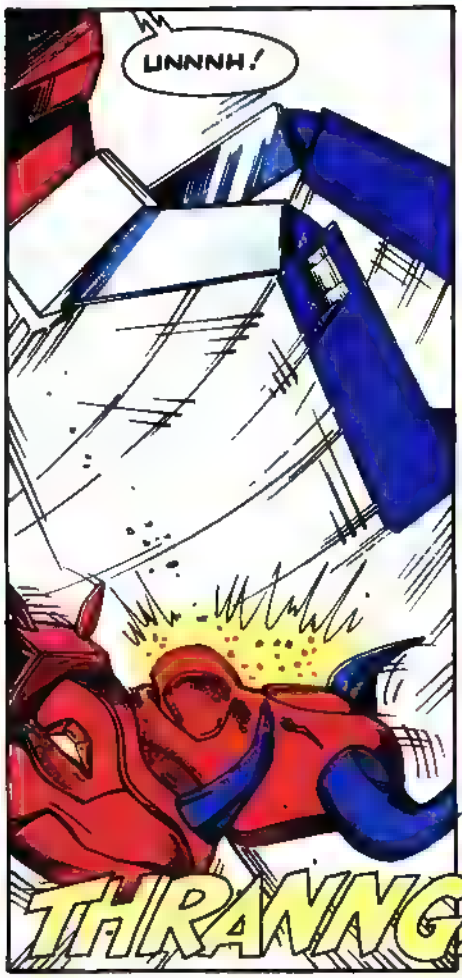

HAH! MEGATRON ASSURED US THAT YOU WOULD BE A CHALLENGE WORTHY OF OUR PROWESS. TRACKING EMPTIES* ON OUR HOMEWORLD OF CYBERTRON HAS TAKEN LONGER THAN THIS!
* DERELICT TRANSFORMERS.
IN COMMON WITH YOUR BREED, RAZORCLAW...
CHOOM!
YOU TALK A GOOD FIGHT!
THUMPH!
NOW... IF I CAN JUST PUT A LITTLE DISTANCE BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE PREDACONS BEFORE--
UH, OH!
DON'T THINK WE WERE INTRODUCED BEFORE, PRIME... I'M TANTRUM.
AND I RECKON THAT ALL THE STRATEGY IN THE WORLD CAN'T BEAT...
SHEER BRUTE FORCE!

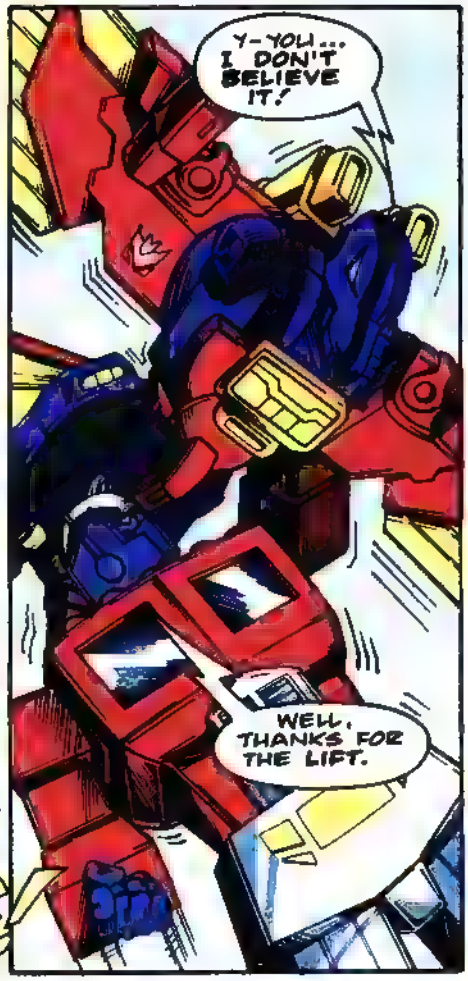

AN INTERESTING PHILOSOPHY, TANTRUM... BUT NOT ONE I AM WILLING TO PUT TO THE TEST.
IF YOU WANT ME...
YOU'LL HAVE TO MOVE SLIGHTLY FASTER THAN DEAD SLOW!
I FEAR MY ATTEMPTS TO BAIT TANTRUM HAVE BEEN A BIT TOO SUCCESSFUL. HE SEEMS TO THRIVE ON THIS BERSERKER FURY THAT HAS GRIPPED HIM. THE SITUATION JUST GOES FROM BAD TO--
WORSE!
HEADSTRONG — CHARGING AT ME FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION!
MANOEUVRABLE AS I AM IN THIS FORM, I DOUBT THAT I CAN AVOID BEING SPEARED IN THIS PREDACON VICE. THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER OPTION...
HAVING PROBLEMS?
YEAH... AND I'VE GOT ME A RINGSIDE SEAT FOR THE END OF OPTIMUS PRIME!
DIVEBOMB!

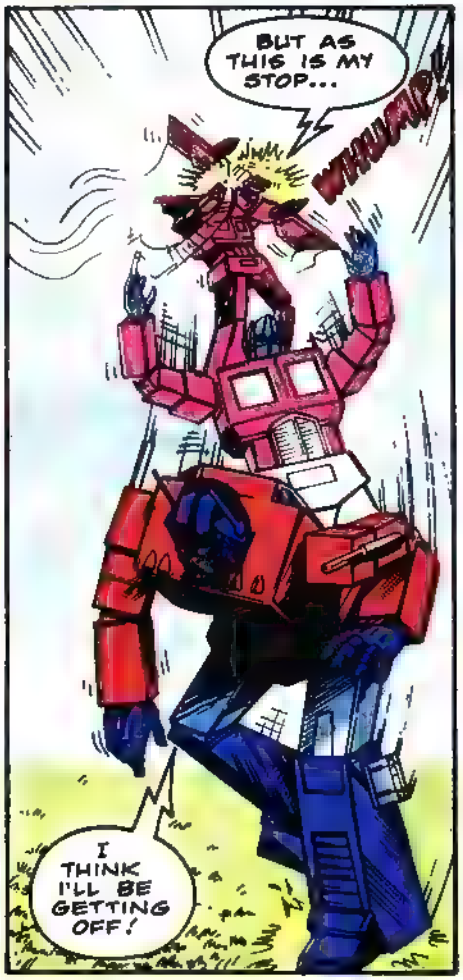












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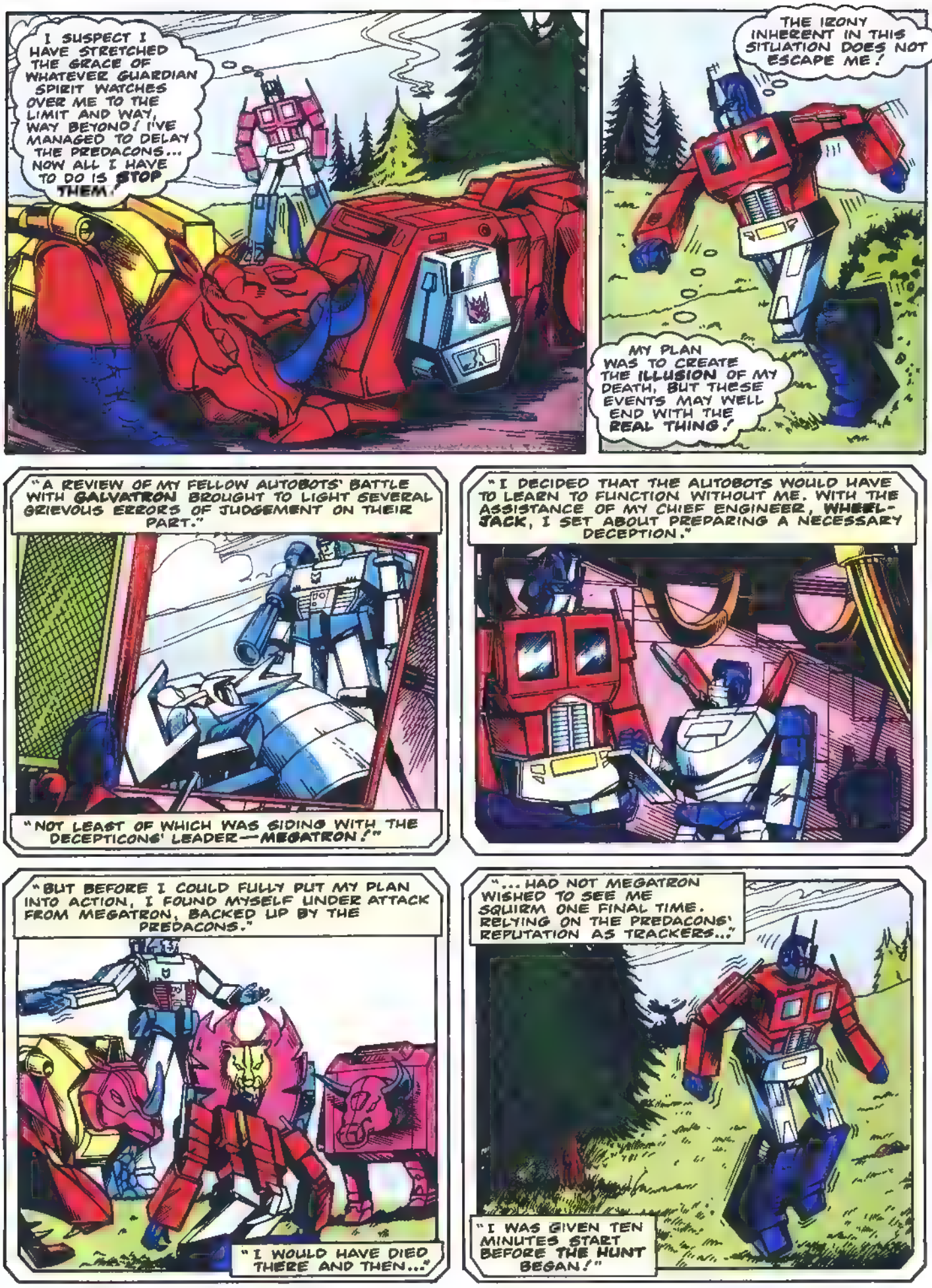
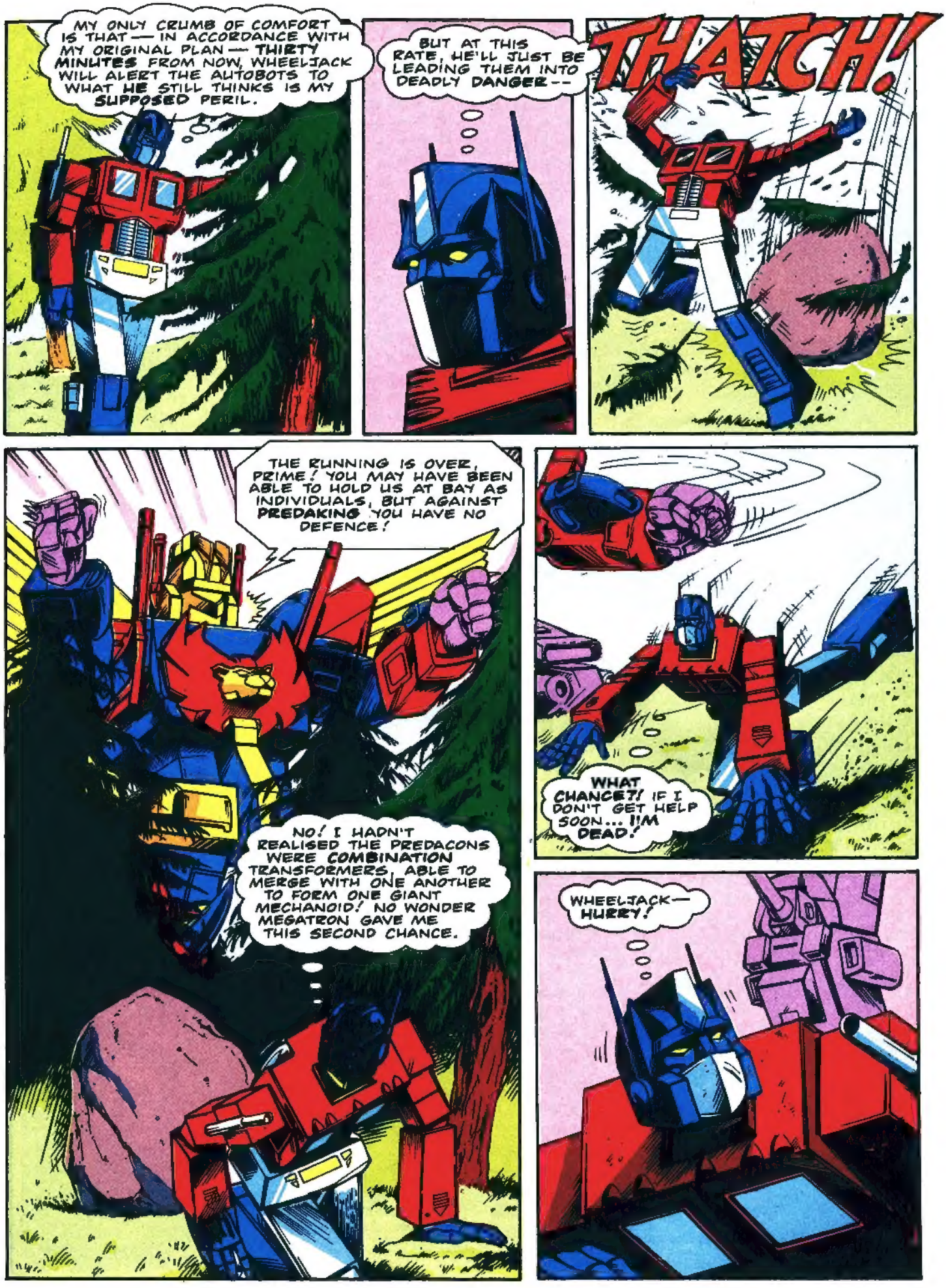
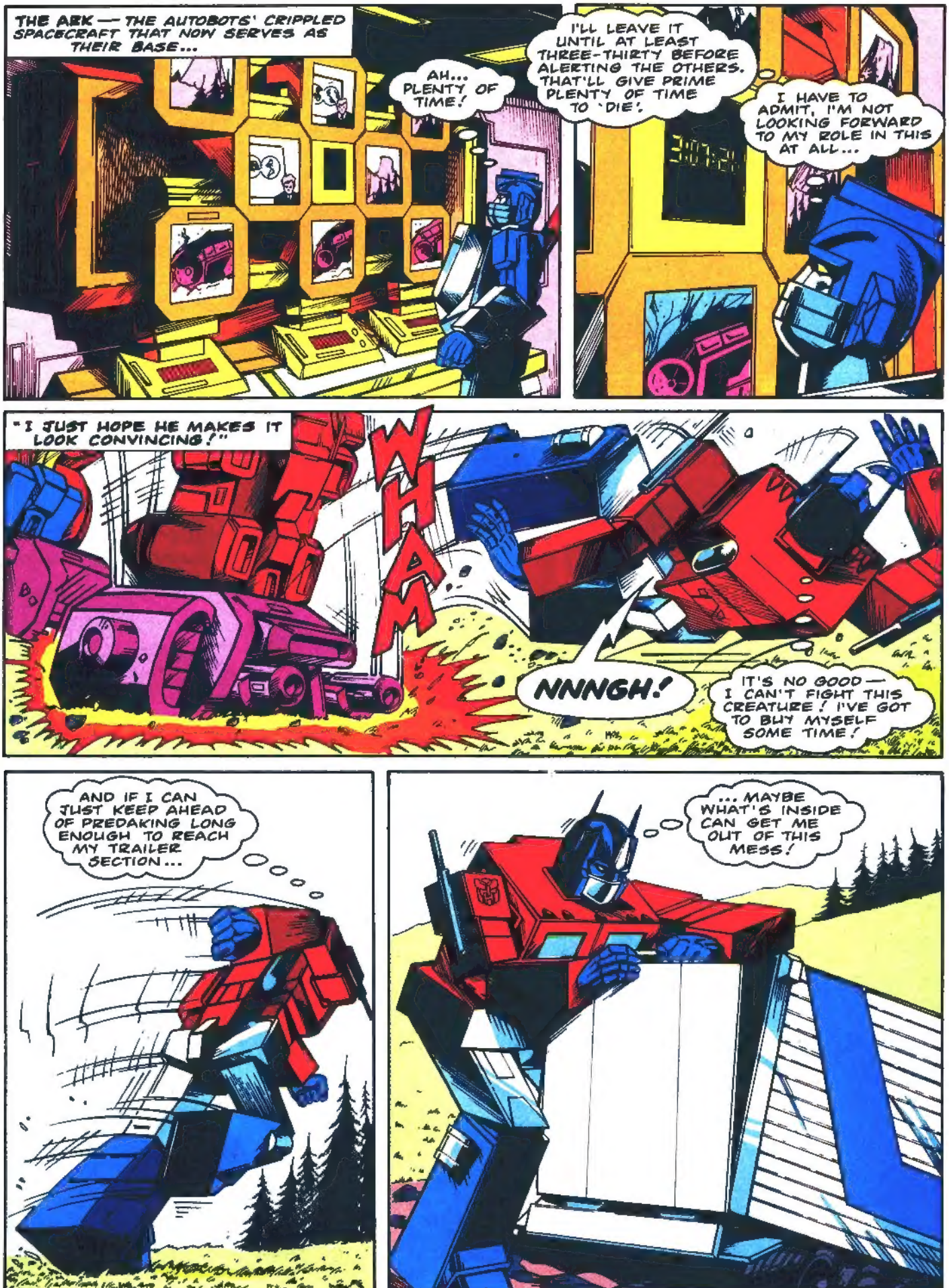
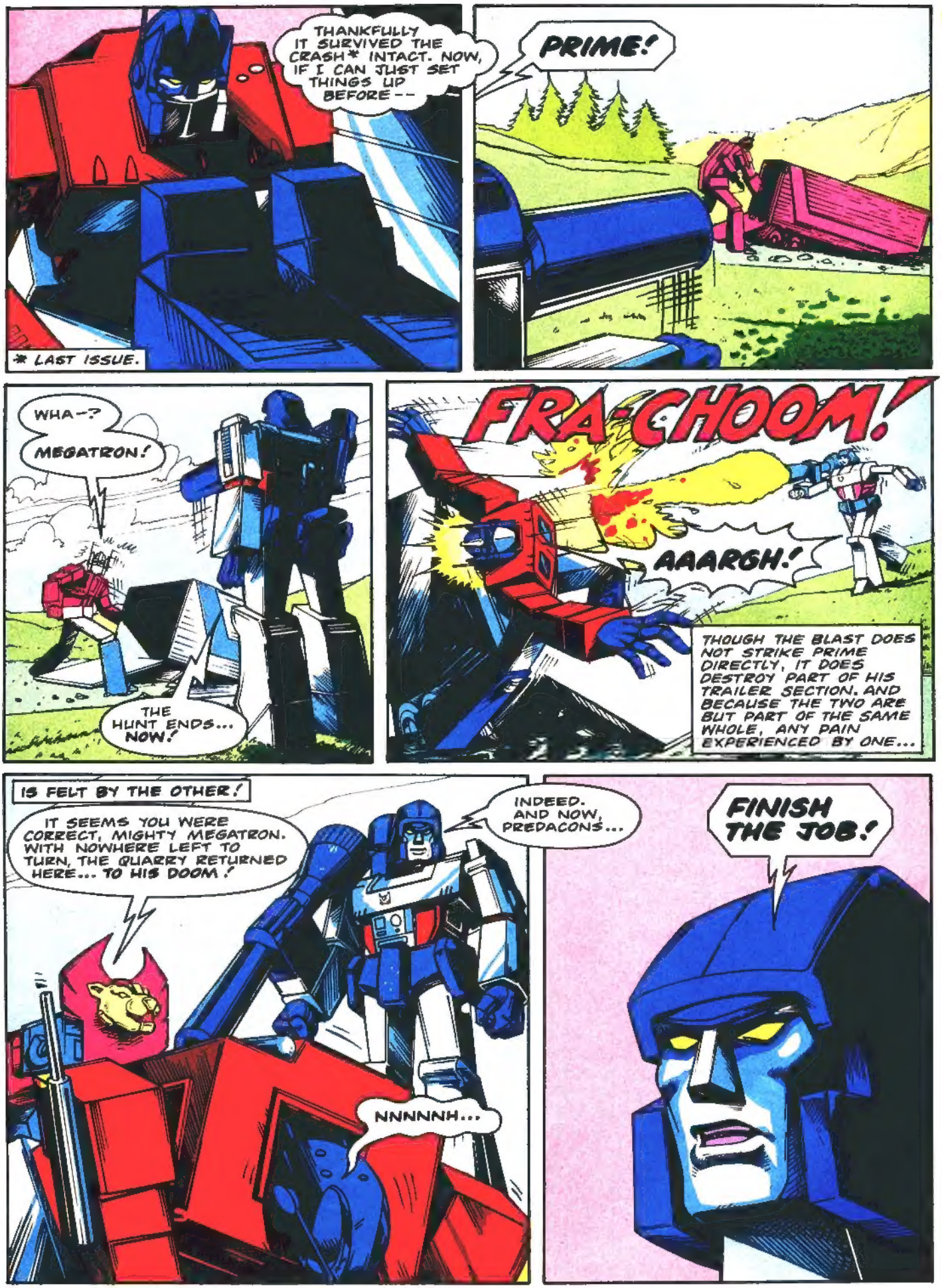
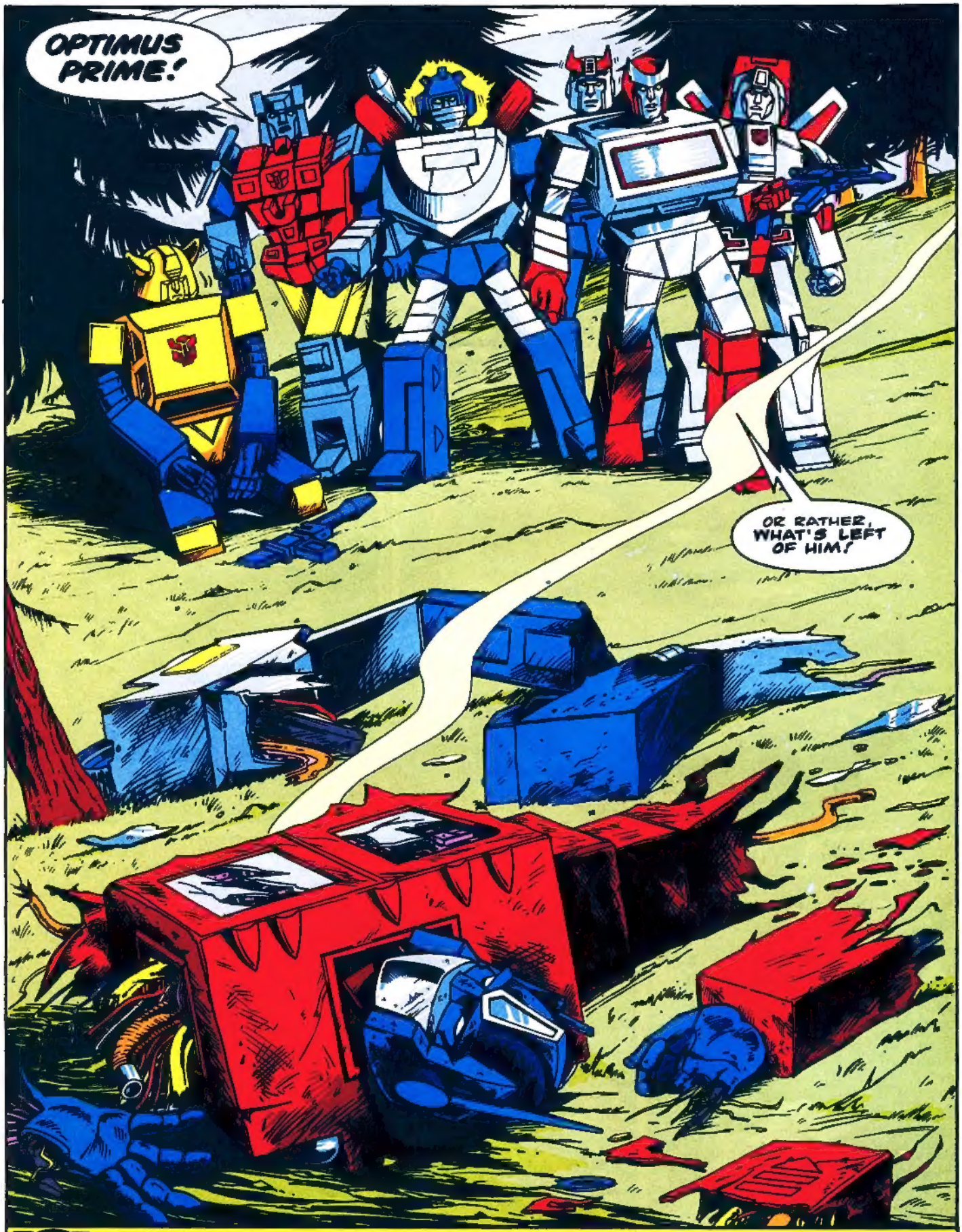

I SUSPECT I HAVE STRETCHED THE GRACE OF WHATEVER GUARDIAN SPIRIT WATCHES OVER ME TO THE LIMIT AND WAY, WAY BEYOND! I'VE MANAGED TO DELAY THE PREDACONS... NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS STOP THEM!
THE IRONY INHERENT IN THIS SITUATION DOES NOT ESCAPE ME!
MY PLAN WAS TO CREATE THE ILLUSION OF MY DEATH, BUT THESE EVENTS MAY WELL END WITH THE REAL THING!
"A REVIEW OF MY FELLOW AUTOBOTS' BATTLE WITH GALVATRON BROUGHT TO LIGHT SEVERAL GRIEVOUS ERRORS OF JUDGEMENT ON THEIR PART."
"NOT LEAST OF WHICH WAS SIDING WITH THE DECEPTICONS' LEADER—MEGATRON!"
"I DECIDED THAT THE AUTOBOTS WOULD HAVE TO LEARN TO FUNCTION WITHOUT ME. WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF MY CHIEF ENGINEER, WHEELJACK, I SET ABOUT PREPARING A NECESSARY DECEPTION."
"BUT BEFORE I COULD FULLY PUT MY PLAN INTO ACTION, I FOUND MYSELF UNDER ATTACK FROM MEGATRON, BACKED UP BY THE PREDACONS."
"I WOULD HAVE DIED THERE AND THEN..."
"... HAD NOT MEGATRON WISHED TO SEE ME SQUIRM ONE FINAL TIME. RELYING ON THE PREDACONS' REPUTATION AS TRACKERS..."
"I WAS GIVEN TEN MINUTES START BEFORE THE HUNT BEGAN!"


MY ONLY CRUMB OF COMFORT IS THAT — IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY ORIGINAL PLAN — THIRTY MINUTES FROM NOW, WHEELJACK WILL ALERT THE AUTOBOTS TO WHAT HE STILL THINKS IS MY SUPPOSED PERIL.
BUT AT THIS RATE, HE'LL JUST BE LEADING THEM INTO DEADLY DANGER--
THATCH!
THE RUNNING IS OVER, PRIME! YOU MAY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HOLD US AT BAY AS INDIVIDUALS, BUT AGAINST PREDAKING YOU HAVE NO DEFENCE!
NO! I HADN'T REALISED THE PREDACONS WERE COMBINATION TRANSFORMERS, ABLE TO MERGE WITH ONE ANOTHER TO FORM ONE GIANT MECHANOID! NO WONDER MEGATRON GAVE ME THIS SECOND CHANCE.
WHAT CHANCE?! IF I DON'T GET HELP SOON... I'M DEAD!
WHEELJACK— HURRY!


THE ARK — THE AUTOBOTS' CRIPPLED SPACECRAFT THAT NOW SERVES AS THEIR BASE...
AH... PLENTY OF TIME!
I'LL LEAVE IT UNTIL AT LEAST THREE-THIRTY BEFORE ALERTING THE OTHERS. THAT'LL GIVE PRIME PLENTY OF TIME TO 'DIE'.
I HAVE TO ADMIT, I'M NOT LOOKING FORWARD TO MY ROLE IN THIS AT ALL...
"I JUST HOPE HE MAKES IT LOOK CONVINCING!"
WHAM
NNNGH!
IT'S NO GOOD — I CAN'T FIGHT THIS CREATURE! I'VE GOT TO BUY MYSELF SOME TIME!
AND IF I CAN JUST KEEP AHEAD OF PREDAKING LONG ENOUGH TO REACH MY TRAILER SECTION...
... MAYBE WHAT'S INSIDE CAN GET ME OUT OF THIS MESS!


THANKFULLY IT SURVIVED THE CRASH* INTACT. NOW, IF I CAN JUST SET THINGS UP BEFORE--
* LAST ISSUE.
PRIME!
WHA-?
MEGATRON!
THE HUNT ENDS... NOW!
FRA-CHOOM!
AAARGH!
THOUGH THE BLAST DOES NOT STRIKE PRIME DIRECTLY, IT DOES DESTROY PART OF HIS TRAILER SECTION. AND BECAUSE THE TWO ARE BUT PART OF THE SAME WHOLE, ANY PAIN EXPERIENCED BY ONE...
IS FELT BY THE OTHER!
IT SEEMS YOU WERE CORRECT, MIGHTY MEGATRON. WITH NOWHERE LEFT TO TURN, THE QUARRY RETURNED HERE... TO HIS DOOM!
INDEED. AND NOW, PREDACONS...
NNNNNH...
FINISH THE JOB!


OPTIMUS PRIME!
OR RATHER, WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM!
NEXT ...THE HARDER THEY DIE!